

Twentieth-Century Women Writers of Color in the Americas
ENGL/AAS/AMST 3580 and FGSS 3581 (4 credits)
Fall 2015 T/R 10:10-11:25
189 Rockefeller Hall

Professor Shelley Wong
282 Goldwin Smith Hall
Office Hours: T/R 3:00-4:00 or by appointment
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This semester, the course will focus primarily on writing by African American and Asian American women writers. As used here, the term “American” refers to the broader geo-political territory of the hemispheric Americas. Over the past twenty years, the study of what used to more commonly be called “American literature” has increasingly shifted its purview to encompass this broader terrain, so much so that the study of American literature is now often referred to as the study of American literatures. This plurality of literatures includes the varieties of literatures (primarily English-language based) within the U.S. as well as those outside the geopolitical boundaries of the U.S. nation-state.

This course will expose you to the formally and thematically wide-ranging work of a number of twentieth-century women authors writing in the US and in Canada. There are no prerequisites for this course—familiarity with either these particular writers or with the contexts of criticism and theory that attend their work will not be assumed. Instead, the production of that knowledge through attentive, thoughtful, and sustained mutual engagement will constitute the collective project of this course.

READINGS:

Carolivia Herron - ***THEREAFTER JOHNNIE***
Jamaica Kincaid - ***A SMALL PLACE***
Shani Mootoo - ***CEREUS BLOOMS AT NIGHT***
Ann Petry - ***THE STREET***
Joy Kogawa - ***OBASAN***
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha - ***DICTEE***
Octavia Butler - ***PARABLE OF THE SOWER***
Fae Myenne Ng - ***BONE***
Louise Erdrich - ***THE ROUND HOUSE***

Additional short readings will be available on the Blackboard site for this course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This course will be conducted as a seminar in which collaborative intellectual engagement and sustained dialogue will be the order of the day.

- regular and punctual attendance and completion of assigned readings by the date we begin our discussion of a given text
- active participation in class discussion
- one class presentation
- informal 2-page quick takes
- one mid-term essay (5-7 pages)
- one final essay (10-12 pages)

Plagiarism:

All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course and not another and must originate with you in form and content, with contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Make yourself familiar with Cornell's Academic Integrity Code, distributed to students in the Policy Notebook and available on-line at <http://www.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>. The code, together with a guide to Acknowledging the Work of Others, can be downloaded from <http://www.cornell.edu/UniversityFaculty/docs/main.html>. In this course, the normal penalty for a violation of the code is an "F" for the term.

SYLLABUS

Week 1 – August

25 TU – Writing and the racial imaginary

27 TH – Beth Loffreda and Claudia Rankine, "Introduction" to *The Racial Imaginary*; Nishitani Osamu, "Anthropos and Humanitas: Two Western Concepts of 'Human Being'"

Week 2 – September

01 TU – A SMALL PLACE

- presentation:

03 TH – A SMALL PLACE

- presentation:

Week 3 – September

08 TU – CEREUS BLOOMS AT NIGHT

- presentation:

10 TH – CEREUS BLOOMS AT NIGHT

- 2-page assignment #1 due today

- presentation:

Week 4 – September

15 TU – *CEREUS BLOOMS AT NIGHT*

17 TH – *THE STREET*

- presentation:

Week 5 – September

22 TU – *THE STREET*

- presentation:

24 TH – *THE STREET*

- 2-page assignment #2 due today

Week 6 – September/October

29 TU – *OBASAN*

- presentation:

01 TH – *OBASAN*

- presentation:

Week 7 – October

06 TU – *OBASAN*

08 TH – Mid-term essay due today.

Week 8 – October

13 TU – **Fall Break**

15 TH – *THEREAFTER JOHNNIE*

- presentation:

Week 9 – October

20 TU – *THEREAFTER JOHNNIE*

- presentation:

22 TH – *THEREAFTER JOHNNIE*

Week 10 – October

27 TU – *DICTEE*

- presentation:

29 TH – *DICTEE*

- 2-page assignment #3 due today
- presentation:

Week 11 – November

03 TU – *DICTEE*

05 TH – *THE ROUND HOUSE*

- presentation:

Week 12 – November

10 TU – *THE ROUND HOUSE*

- presentation:

12 TH – *BONE*

- presentation:

Week 13 – November

17 TU – *BONE*

- presentation:

19 TH – *BONE*

Week 14 – November

24 TU – *PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

- presentation:

26 TH – **Thanksgiving Recess**

Week 15 – December

01 TU – *PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

- presentation:

03 TH – *PARABLE OF THE SOWER*

Week 16 – December

10 TH – Final essay due by 4:30 today.